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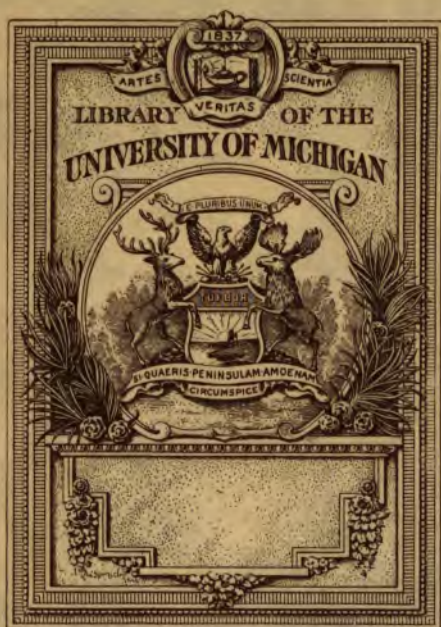
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**Thou shalt give him everlasting felicity
and make him glad with the joy of Thy
countenance**

GEORGE ZABRISKIE GRAY D.D.

A MEMORIAL SERMON

PREACHED AT

ST. JOHN'S MEMORIAL CHAPEL

CAMBRIDGE MASSACHUSETTS

ON THE

FEAST OF ALL SAINTS

NOVEMBER 1 1889

BY THE

REV. WILLIAM LAWRENCE



PRINTED FOR THE FAMILY

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SERMON

Thou shalt give him everlasting felicity, and make him glad with the joy of Thy countenance. PSALM 21:6.

TWO or three years ago, when Dr. GRAY was preparing a sermon to preach in the Chapel of Harvard University, he exclaimed in his decided way: "Those young men do not want arguments; but a life." Then laying aside all thought of a labored discourse he told the students, in clear and simple language, the story of Bishop Hannington's life and martyrdom.

After his example I bring to you, on this evening of the Feast of All Saints, simply the story of a consecrated life; and I leave it with you to speak for itself and for CHRIST.

The ancestry of GEORGE ZABRISKIE GRAY foretells the man. On his mother's side the ancient Polish blood had intermingled with that of the French Huguenot and the Scotch and Dutch Protestant. Since his Dutch-Huguenot ancestor landed in America, about two hundred years ago, a large number of ministers can trace their descent to him; and to-day there are more than a score of them preaching the Gospel. On his father's side, also, we find a stock of Presbyterians who emigrated to Ireland during Cromwell's Protectorate, came to this country in 1795 and settled on the Hudson, near Newburgh. They there revealed the characteristics of the country gentleman, with tastes for art and verse, tempered, however, in the last generation, by a life of mercantile energy.

When then we learn that a child was born in New York on the fourteenth day of July, 1838, of such parentage, and that he was baptized in the Broome Street Reformed

Dutch Church by the name of GEORGE ZABRISKIE, thus bearing with his surname the stamp of both sides of the house, we know what manner of man to expect. We look for a piety of decided traits moulding a life of intellectual and administrative development, and we are not disappointed in our expectations. Other features were revealed in passing years but these were his fundamental characteristics.

During his childhood the last trait mentioned, that of administrative development, could be trusted to take care of itself in New York, where the conversation on business in the home, the restless industry of the street, and the growing realization of the city as the metropolis, kept the boy alert to the practical interests of life.

There was but little danger of any check of intellectual development ; for a boy born with an insatiable hunger for books and knowledge can be trusted to find intellectual stimulus.

But amidst the distractions of a restless, city life piety must have a hard struggle for existence, unless the pressure of the world is held at arm's length by the sanctity of a religious home. This, which he always felt to be the greatest of blessings, was given him. His religious impressions were also being unconsciously affected by the worship of the University Place Church which his family attended during his boyhood. Its Pastor, the Rev. Dr. Potts, a strong Presbyterian, — who at a New England dinner provoked a controversy with Bishop Wainwright by the toast, “a Church without a Bishop and a State without a King,” — was hardly the man to lead one towards the Episcopal Church. Yet there was in the semi-Gothic architecture of the building, the style of music and the pastor's solemn and stately manner of conducting the Service, an ancient and ecclesiastical atmosphere which distinguished this from most Presbyterian churches of that day.

While he was at school in Geneva, Switzerland, the influence of the Lutheran Service and that of the English Chapel must have deepened his interest in our Church, so that when his family moved to Staten Island, and in the absence of a Presbyterian Church, connected themselves with St. John's Church, Clifton, the influence of the life and teachings of the Rev. Dr. John C. Eccleston, led both Zabriskie and his brother Albert to be confirmed in the Church in which they were to do noble work, and where their names will be treasured as saints, diverse in character but one in CHRIST.

After four years in the University of New York, from which he was graduated in 1858, his horizon began to widen. His school experience in Geneva had already brought him into contact with boys of varied classes and nationalities, but a journey to Europe, Egypt and the Holy Land in 1859 developed new features.

1107

It was then that he began to realize that love of travelling which became almost a passion with him, a passion, however, held in close check by his sense of duty to his work as Pastor and Dean.

In reading books of travels, in waylaying travellers from New Zealand, India, China, Japan and Alaska, in planning anticipated journeys which never took place, in a quick run to Mexico, Florida or Bermuda and occasionally to Europe, he tasted the pleasures which in their fulness fidelity to his calling denied him.

At this time, too, he tested his ability to catch foreign languages. Through his Genevan life, French and German were almost as familiar to him as his mother tongue. As he and his fellow-travellers passed through various countries, he was so quick to catch and use the vernacular, that he became their interpreter.

Upon his return he entered the seminary

1870

at Alexandria. The School was then in its glory. Dr. Sparrow, the Nestor of Evangelical Theology, was great in character and teaching; his fellow-students, some of whom now stand as leaders in the Church, were congenial; and the atmosphere of the place was in harmony with his religious opinions. In the Evangelical spirit of these earlier leaders, who then taught at Alexandria and gave their impress to the school, in their personal piety, their prayerful spirit and their strong theology, there was a noble basis for the wider thought and life of this generation. However far we may have moved from them in method, we may be ever grateful for their spiritual leadership, for there is no movement or school of thought in the Church of England or this country during the past fifty years but must trace much of its spiritual heritage to the piety of Evangelicalism before it was touched by the deadly poison of partisanship.

On the twenty-second of April, 1862, GEORGE ZABRISKIE GRAY was presented to Bishop Horatio Potter to be Ordained.

As he stands before the chancel in St. Luke's Church, Catskill, we see a young man twenty-four years of age, of strong physique, high intellectual attainments, fond of books, society and travel, with marked business capacity and with exceptional opportunities to exercise them and build up a large fortune. He could have taken a high position in the city of his birth as merchant, banker or lawyer: he might have passed his days in devotion to literature or travel, and at the same time have held the respect of all persons as a gentleman and a Christian. On the other hand, there was the calling of the Christian minister. It offered no other inducement than that of preaching the Gospel of his LORD and Saviour, the daily routine of the Parish Priest in visiting the sick and afflicted, and perhaps the bearing his part in elevating the literary and theological standards in the Church.

There was no hesitation in his decision. With no consciousness that he was making any great sacrifice, he simply acted according to the dictates of his conscience and consecrated himself, his strength, intellectual capacities and his fortune in the service of the Master. To the Bishop's question, "Do you trust that you are inwardly moved by the HOLY GHOST to take upon you this Office and Ministration, to serve GOD for the promoting of His glory, and the edifying of His people," he gave his glad reply in that strong tone with which we are so familiar, "I trust so," and he never for a moment regretted it.

While such decisions are made and such consecrations occur, the mouth of the cynic who says that religion and the ministry have ceased to appeal to the devotion of strong and able men, is stopped. For if there ever was a man, virile in all his features, it was Dr. GRAY.

A few months later he entered by marriage into that union which, next to his ministry, gave him the greatest joy and comfort.

It was not in him to rest on the eve of action. Immediately after his Ordination he threw himself into Parish work. First for a few months in charge of the two Churches at Warwick, N. Y., and Vernon, N. J., then for two years at Kinderhook, N. Y., and again for eleven years at Bergen Point, N. J., he was a devoted Pastor, Priest and Preacher.

No man knows his own characteristic capacities for the Holy Ministry until he has tested them. It is wonderful how the work develops and reveals the latent powers. That there was behind his strong voice and frame, his brusque and sometimes aggressive manner a heart as tender as a child's may not have surprised his nearest friends, but was a perpetual revelation to every one who came to know him well. Some have thought that this manner, which belied his character, was the

result of a pushing executive mind which chafed at delay, others that it was due to his nervous temperament. Probably both are partly right. But some of his nearest friends have felt that the habit was gained in early years through his effort to conceal his tender heart. His emotional nature was very near the surface; to have given it full play would have weakened him; therefore he unconsciously covered it with this thin shell of an abrupt manner, which, however, in the face of trouble or sorrow was so easily shattered.

The people of his three Parishes, as well as the congregation of this Chapel, quickly discovered his tender sympathy. To be unfortunate, to be sick or afflicted was an immediate call upon him. He carried his people's cares with him day and night. Among the poor as well as the rich at Bergen Point his memory is still tenderly cherished. His sympathy and love for children was also intensified by the death of his first-born son.

One class, those who, once living in wealth or comfort, had fallen into straightened circumstances, he seemed to take as his peculiar charge. He gave them money and sympathy; but, what is more rare, he made them feel that his house was their second home. Pastoral work was always natural and dear to him.

The combination of these characteristics made him the able preacher that he was. His executive ability and taste for business kept him in touch with practical life, his interest in men led him to wish to tell them what had been revealed to him; the flash of light from a fresh text was a thought for himself, but no sooner his than he burned to give it to others. His immense range of reading and his wide experience in travelling illustrated and illumined his thought. With a good degree of imagination, with a voice as strong and dogmatic as that of the Baptist, he could warn and rebuke; with a heart tender

and full of pity for sinning, suffering men, he could plead and comfort. "The comfortable Gospel" was a favorite phrase of his. The tones of his voice still ring in my ears as from this pulpit in behalf of his people he echoed the prayer of the Psalmist, "Lead me to the Rock that is higher than I." Every thought and experience inwrought into his character was the store house of his sermons; he spoke with the power of personal conviction and personal faith. And when in the deep distress of his last days, he was tasting as he never had before, the comfort and the hope of a loving Saviour, he exclaimed, "If God should give me my strength again, how I could preach." And, how he would have preached!

Any one who knew him, knows that his Parish work was aggressive. He led his people in charities and missionary activities. His cottage lectures, still remembered at Bergen Point, have borne fruit in the erection of St. John's Church.

Two features in this part of his life should not be passed without notice. These were the years when partisan spirit in the Church was at its height. The Episcopal Church was thought to be large enough for only one School of Churchmanship and each was striving for the mastery. Voices like that of Muhlenberg were heard, but, like the prophet's, were unheeded. We now look back on those days with sorrow tinged with perhaps a supercilious sense of our present superiority. But the leaders on both or all sides were strong and wise men in their day. It is always easy for the generation who reap the fruits of a battle to criticize the plans or strategy of the actors.

It was only to be expected that a man who was of warm temperament and active brain, and who had in his veins the blood of French Huguenots and Dutch Presbyterians, should speak strongly and act vigorously. As the Diocese of New Jersey had little sympathy

with the Evangelical element, the voice of young Gray, though often heard in the din of the battle, was little regarded. But, let this stand as characteristic of the man, that many of his best and dearest friends were on the other side. No differences of opinion could weaken the cords of his affection. He was incapable of harboring ill-will, and though his Bishop, Odenheimer, differed from him on ecclesiastical questions as east from west, yet they were to each other as father and son.

The other feature was one which in fact was a characteristic of his whole life. His active brain would not allow him to confine his thoughts to the routine of work, but prompted him to extend his reading and writing to many subjects of historic and theological interest. The result of this was seen in the publication from time to time of papers, poems, and essays, of the comforting little book entitled "The Spiritual Doctrine of Recognition in the World to Come;" and, later, of the careful and

original study of the marriage relations under the title "Husband and Wife." But at this time his reading and his interest in child life drew him into the study of that singular episode of the middle ages, the Children's Crusade. With characteristic industry he read the ancient chronicles in the libraries of Europe and this country. His linguistic talent, his familiarity with the continent of Europe and his imagination were brought into service. So that from the volumes which had been gathering dust for centuries, he sketched a vivid picture. From his pages we catch sight of tens of thousands of children gathering together in France and Germany at the call of the Boy Preachers. We follow that strange army over the Alps and hear from the cliffs the echo of the crusader's hymns; we pass the bodies of hundreds of children resting, weeping, sick and dying from cold and hunger. We accompany them to the Mediterranean and watch the ships disappear

below the horizon; and then we weep at their betrayal, shipwreck and bondage to the Saracens whom they had gone forth to conquer.

The story breathes with pity and love for these misguided children, and is a revelation of the author's tender, sympathetic heart.

In 1876 Dr. GRAY was elected to the position of Dean of the Episcopal Theological School in Cambridge.

The School was founded upon the basis of justification by faith and the Evangelical principles which Dr. GRAY professed. But many people had read into these noble terms a spirit of partisanship and exclusiveness which did not belong to them. Moreover, Cambridge was popularly considered to be the hot-bed of all forms of rationalism and infidelity. Evangelicalism in the home of rationalism gave glorious opportunity for the critics and enemies of the Institution. The School, while heralded as rich, was at about that time borrowing money to pay its running

expenses and was in danger of closing its gates from poverty. Dr. Stone, one of the noblest of that noble band of leaders of the Evangelical School of the Church, had just resigned the position of Dean in order to pass his declining years in a well-earned rest. It was a difficult post; and it called for a man of courage and devotion to accept it.

On the seventeenth day of May, the new Dean took up his residence in Cambridge and entered upon his duties.

In his administration it would have been easy for Dean GRAY to have appealed to party spirit for his support and to have let the School run its life out with the party.

In his relations to the spirit of Cambridge, it might have seemed natural for a man of his inherited traits and mental training to have steeled himself against its influence or to have held himself aloof from its contact. But such was not the man. He was from New Amsterdam and not from New England, he was born

a Presbyterian and not a Puritan, he was Orthodox to the backbone and not a rationalist, he was provincial and Cambridge is provincial; but back of all he was a gentleman, a scholar and a Christian. Dogmatic in manner he was in fact receptive of new truth. Strongly set in argument, he would feel the truth in the reasoning of the other side, and in time would unconsciously absorb what he had denied in debate. He gradually allowed himself to breathe more and more of the atmosphere with which he was surrounded. No! I hardly do him justice in this expression. The key note of his life was, as I said at the beginning, intellectual and spiritual development.

Realizing, perhaps before he came here, certainly soon after his coming, that the line of thought in which he was moving must lead into wider fields, he set to work to discover them.

His duties as professor gave him a special stimulus in reading, thought and spiritual de-

velopment. His knowledge of other languages, especially of German, came to his aid and opened up hitherto unknown vistas of religious thought. Sometimes his omniverous reading seemed to overwhelm his thought. Soon the old system which was hemming in the man showed signs of breaking before the fresh light; and then with the passing of years came new and grander views of GOD, of the Church and of mankind. His conversation, teaching and preaching revealed the movement, but his Baldwin Lectures, written in the midst of and in spite of the fatal disease which was sapping his life, give the most mature expression of his thought.

His whole conception of religion became more ethical and spiritual. His study of the Person of CHRIST led him to a deeper realization of the Catholic doctrine of the Trinity as the basis of religious faith; the doctrine of the Incarnation took on wider and deeper relations; the Atonement became less me-

chanical and more spiritual; the fact of CHRIST'S Resurrection rose to a position of higher and higher significance in his preaching and teaching; the truth of the present, living CHRIST and of the energizing power of the HOLY SPIRIT in the Church received new emphasis.

He was led by his study of evidences and of modern thought and life to a higher and higher appreciation of the historic Church, her Institutions and her Catholic Creeds. But there was one note which he struck with all the persistency and strength at his command, the Catholicity of the Church. He thus speaks in one of his Baldwin Lectures :

If anything is evident, it is that the Church shows that it is Apostolic and Catholic by endorsing no Theology and committing itself to no scientific results. There are many systems or schools of Christian thought within the allowable limits of adherence to the Creed and Prayer Book. There are many theories of particular subjects, such as sacraments, ministry, atonement, eschatology, and others more or less important, many theories even of the very organization of the

Church. But the Church identifies itself with none, regards all as only approximate at the best, and authorizes no man to speak for it as to the final definition of anything.

Of course much of this was and is in the air ; thousands are drifting into freer light ; but it was not in him to drift. If he was not a leader of religious thought in the larger meaning of the term, he was by his reading and thought close on to the heels of the leaders, and through his voice and action the men and students behind him were kept in touch with the advance. He did not move rashly, he loved truth too much to tempt her with foolhardy statements and experiments, and he loved men and their faith too dearly to unsettle them before he had a better truth to give.

The development of his thought made itself felt in his work as a teacher. His was not the single eye of the scholar seeking truth for truth's sake only ; he was in too close touch with life for that ; he sought it also for man's

sake, and he brought it quickly to men's use. This eagerness to teach combined with his active temperament was sometimes a drawback, inasmuch as it did not allow him to wait for the slower working of the student's mind ; he kept well in the lead. If he was restless at what he felt to be unreasonable dulness and spoke quickly, the aggrieved student always knew that behind the voice was the tender heart and the large spirit ; and whatever his opinion on that point, the student had full confidence in the man. It was this that drew to him the loyalty of every young man that passed through these gates. His reverence for the truths he taught and his respect for the sacredness of his calling restrained his sense of humor in the class room. But what was thus lost by him was gain for the students in the realization of the awfulness of treating sacred themes.

A man with such convictions and with Dean GRAY'S strength of character could

not, with a sympathetic Faculty, help having a marked effect upon the growth of the Institution. In his Annual Report for the year 1885-6, he gives his conception of the spirit of this School:

This, then, is what the School stands for: candid, advanced, unpartisan, manly preparation for the Ministry of CHRIST in this comprehensive Church. Nothing else will long be tolerated by the present growing spirit of the Church. No other method will be submitted to by these young men who have tasted the mental culture and activity of our own region. None other is feasible in the presence of a great University, where men have learned to think for themselves, to distinguish between divine revelation and human opinion, and to appreciate the rich birthright of freedom that is theirs who belong to our Historical Communion. This method alone, as all signs indicate, is to prevail in the large future now opening before our Church. To this conception of our work we shall try to be true.

If one would gain an insight into what Dean GRAY felt to be the cardinal features of the Ministry which this School hopes to cultivate, he may find it in his last Report:

Our aim, besides the development of the spirit of consecration and the laying of a sound foundation in the branches

pursued, is, according to our ability, to inspire those under our influence with certain deeply imbedded conceptions of the Ministry, as essential to the work to which they are called in this day and land. . . . It must be a ministry that is, above all, devoted to CHRIST, not merely in the usual sense thereof, but in the sense of a clear apprehension of His isolatedness as the Revealer and Redeemer. . . . This requires a clear apprehension of the truth and the nature of those fundamental tenets of Christianity, which are yet but one, the Trinity in Unity, the Incarnation of the Eternal Son, His Atonement, and the justification of men by His merits alone. These truths, if they are to be preached in an age that so much needs them, are to be studied with the aid of the latest and deepest researches into every quarter whence light can come. . . . The minister, furthermore, must be loyal to the Church whose Orders he receives The clergyman must be manly, not only superior to puerilities, but one who can be trusted for his integrity as well as respected for his sagacity. . . . Once more the minister must be thoroughly in sympathy with this land and this people.

He here and in his whole bearing, to quote from one who knows whereof he speaks, "presents an ideal lofty and inspiring, which appeals to all that is honorable and manly in the student, to his conscience and to his reason, which, if carried out, would raise up for

the Church a type of ministers commanding respect for their office by the respect freely conceded to their character."

I know of no better testimony to his success as an Administrator than the facts that our halls are to-day filled with a body of students who are, we believe, worthy of his hopes, and that we have a body of Alumni, high in character and usefulness, loyal to the School and to the Church, men in whom he gloried and whom he loved as a father does his sons. The memory of that last parting at the Alumni dinner in June, where a broken voice and silence told more than words, will ever remain as a benediction to the School. That evening was, as he himself described it, his "Pisgah." He had led the School up within sight of great hopes, but it was not given him to enter in.

But we cannot forget that he had other duties than that of Dean.

Filling the chairs of Homiletics and Pasto-

ral care as well as that of Theology for several years, he was also the pastor of a large congregation in this Chapel ; and many of them know better than I can tell how his powers matured and his sympathies deepened with years. It was the one regret of his position here that his other duties prevented him from a fuller devotion to his pastoral work, though how he accomplished what he did was a mystery to those who knew him best. He felt strongly that personal contact leads to better understanding and closer sympathy. He therefore made it a duty as well as a pleasure to meet in social or spiritual gatherings the clergymen of his own Church and of other Christian bodies. As the Dean of the Eastern Convocation, a member of the Diocesan Board of Missions, a Deputy to the General Convention, and as a member of the Advisory Committee on the Mexican Mission, in which he took a deep interest, and in many other ways he discharged his duty to

the Church at large. What he was to his brethren in the Ministry many of you well know. His last act before sailing to Bermuda, a very sick man, was to collect a fund with which to send a brother clergyman, who seemed to have less chance of life than himself, to a southern climate. He has passed to his reward, but the recipient of his bounty still lives and joins with us here in this Service in gratitude to God for the kind and noble heart.

He was one of those who crowded the hours with work, for to work was the joy of his life; to be obliged to cease from work and become a care to others was his great dread. Months ago when he first realized his illness he exclaimed, "Well, if it is God's will that my work shall end here and now, I am ready!" Crowded with engagements, faithful in his duties as citizen, clergyman and Dean, he was more, far more than a man of engagements and duties and work.

The fireside of the Deanery was the centre of his life's joy and interest. It belonged to him, to his family and, I may almost say, to all men. The college boy, coming from a happy home, found here his second home ; and young Harvard graduates throughout the country look to that house with gratitude for their warm reception. The theological student seldom entered that he did not find another before him. The Deanery was the School's hospital, for there the sick student was carried. The western bishop, the missionary, the traveller, all found the same welcome. To neighbors, friends, and strangers as well, the door stood ever open. And even the study door was rarely, I may say never, shut.

It was a home where envy, sordid ambition and petty rivalries were unknown. His genial heart, his humor, his sense of honor, his sympathy with all that is pure, lovely and of good report were caught by all who entered.

Friend of the open hand, the genial eye,
The lip that faltered never —

Thank GOD for thy life.

But GOD's call came and found him ready.
The strong frame was weakened, the voice
broken, the eyes darkened, and the hand
ceased to write, but the man remained. In
his weariness he longed for rest. He breathed
the words,

O Paradise, O Paradise,
'T is weary waiting here.

And on the fourth day of August, when the
light of a Sunday morning was breaking over
the peaceful hills of Sharon, the hour of his
release came, and (to use his own favorite
expression in speaking of the Christian's
death), he fell asleep.

He rests from pain and distress, but "glad
with the joy of God's countenance," still lives
and works. His life reminds us that the joy
of labor exists beyond the veil, and his voice,

so familiar within these walls, now seems to
say,

God hath other fields

Than those ye know. His sunlight and His rain
Fall not alone on the remembered earth ;
But here, as there, the duteous harvest yields
Reward to all ; and I am glad again,
Tilling the land of this my newer birth.

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